

**Responses to Inquiries
RFP #121 (Kinship Locator)**

How many hours per week are you expecting will be necessary to complete the work in each region?

It should take no more than 40 hours/week per region. Some weeks the kinship locator may work less than 40 hours and some weeks he/she may work more.

Will office space be provided or be available for staff in these positions?

No, although if the kinship locator is working in a town where CPS has an office, there may be an extra office or cube available for him/her to utilize for the day.

Will the Kinship Locators be expected to complete background checks/screening on potential kinship resources, or will these tasks be the responsibility of DSS? The RFP does not mention this task, but we are aware that the DSS Kinship Locators in Sioux Falls and Pierre are completing these checks. Are there other screening expectations the Kinship Locator will be expected to preform, or will the role of the Kinship Locator be strictly to locate and engage, and then provide the resource information to DSS for screening?

Yes, there may be times when the kinship locator will assist DSS with background checks on individuals. The main intent of the contract will be to locate and engage relatives, but at times helping out with background checks/screenings paperwork may be needed.

RFP Sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 refer to increasing the number of relatives available. What are the current baseline numbers of relatives engaged in each region? What will the baseline be for tracking these increases? Has DSS established a targeted rate of increase they expect to see as a result of this contract?

Children in a Relative Placement in December of 2014:

- Region 5 17 children placed in kinship care out of 100 in care = 17%
- Region 7 7 children placed in kinship care out of 75 in care = 9%

Children entering foster care in December of 2014

- Region 5 10 new children entering foster care
- Region 7 2 new children entering foster care

The expectation is a thorough relative search will be completed for children in care. DSS would like to see an increase in the number of relatives identified for each child which may result in an increase in relative placements, but a baseline has not been set. The contractor(s) will document efforts to engage relatives.

How many cases does DSS anticipate that the offeror will serve annually in Region 5?

Children entering care in FY2014

- Region 5 86 children entered care
- Region 7 55 children entered care

DSS will prioritize the cases referred to the kinship locator. Upon removal, a referral would be made to the kinship locator at the 48 hour hearing and the children would be assigned to the kinship locator for 60-90 days. The kinship locator would complete the relative search screen, diligent relative search checklist, send letters, etc., during this time.

In Section 3.1.3 on page 5 of the RFP, it states that “Child Protection Services will provide various relative search resources as tools for identifying and locating potential kinship resources.” Will there be a cost to the offeror to use these search resources? If so, how much should be included in the cost proposal to cover these expenses?

There will be no cost to use the tools CPS has created and utilize. The offeror will need to work closely with the Family Services Specialists or other CPS staff for information off of UJS and Mainframe. There may be sites the kinship locator chooses to use such as on line tools or search engines where a fee is associated, but there are also sites free where information can be accessed on families. If the offeror chooses to utilize sites where there are fee's that will need to be covered within the cost proposal.

Does DSS expect that the offeror will travel within the region to personally engage family members, or will this personal contact be handled by the Family Services Specialist?

Yes there will be travel for the kinship locator. Travel includes but is not limited to meetings with CPS staff and travel to meet with a relative to help fill out paperwork or get finger prints completed. If there is a relative who isn't responding to letters or telephone calls, the kinship locator will discuss with CPS to decide what continued efforts will be made to engage the relative.

Will DSS establish a standing MOU or court order that will give the offeror's staff ongoing access to child and family case records and data?

When a family or child is assigned to a family locator, FACIS access to that family will be provided. When the offeror signs the Kinship Locator contract with DSS/CPS, this allows CPS to share family records for the purpose of locating relatives.

In the “Diligent Search for Relatives” section of the CPS Procedures Manual, it states on page 104 that “The Family Services Specialist must try to obtain a list with current addresses and phone number of all relatives known to the parent(s) from each parent.” Does DSS expect that this task will become the responsibility of the offeror in Regions 5 and 7?

Yes, the kinship locator would assist with this. When children first come into care, CPS staff begin the process of obtaining names and contact information of relatives, this will then be taken over by the kinship locator to build on the list of relatives available for placement or connections for children in care. The kinship locator will work closely with the Team and Family Services Specialist assigned to the case, with regular meetings to staff cases with each office in the region.

In the “Diligent Search for Relatives” section of the CPS Procedures Manual, it states on page 104 that “When possible, the Family Services Specialist should attempt to convene a family meeting asking the parent(s) to invite all relatives in the immediate area for the purpose of identifying possible placement resources for their child. Relatives living out of the area may be included using teleconferencing.” Does DSS expect that this task will become the responsibility of the offeror in Regions 5 and 7? Will the offeror be expected to provide meeting space and teleconferencing capability.

It will be the responsibility of the kinship locator to document and notify CPS of all relatives and contact information found. CPS will be responsible for setting up family meetings and finding meeting space.

In the “Diligent Search for Relatives” section of the CPS Procedures Manual, it states on page 105 that searching the FACIS/FAMIS system is one of the required steps in locating relatives. Will DSS provide the offeror’s staff with access to the FACIS/FAMIS system? Will there be a cost to the offeror to use these resources? If so, how much should be included in the offeror’s cost proposal for access?

The kinship locator will have access to FAMIS/FAMIS system and there will be no cost to using this system.

In the “Diligent Search for Relatives” section of the CPS Procedures Manual, it states on page 105 that “When a parent refuses to provide information regarding relatives, it is appropriate to ask the court to order the parent to provide the needed information.” Will DSS request these court orders, since the offeror will not have the standing to do so?

DSS will request the court to order the parents to share names and contact information for relatives.